

Agenda Item: I.A.

DATE: November 20, 2008

SUBJECT: UTK – UTHSC Memorandum of Understanding for Transfer of UTK Graduate Degree Programs in Audiology and Speech to UTHSC

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The attached Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) and the University of Tennessee, Health Sciences Center (UTHSC) was approved by the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees October 24, 2008.

The MOU proposes transfer of administrative and degree granting authority (but not physical relocation) for three graduate programs in audiology and speech pathology from UTK to UTHSC, effective July 1, 2009. The M.A. (M.S. after July 1, 2009) in Speech-Language Pathology, the Aud.D (Audiology), and the Ph.D. in Speech and Hearing Science will continue to be offered on the UTK campus in existing UTK facilities by UTHSC faculty for UTHSC students who pay UTHSC fees and receive UTHSC degrees.

The organizational and budgetary transfer of the graduate programs comes as a consensus recommendation from a UT task force reviewing the strategic priorities of both campuses. An enrollment and budget plan has been developed for the administration of the graduate programs by the UTHSC College of Allied Health Sciences. Proposed fees for the programs will be higher than those assessed at UTK. The fee structure is recommended as being reflective of fees in health sciences and competitive with similar programs in the region. The University has identified additional funding to support the programs for a four-year period of time. As an additional action associated with the transfer of the graduate programs, UTK will terminate the B.A. in Audiology and the B.A. in Speech Pathology, with phase-out ending August 2014.

The MOU also addresses transition of the management of audiology and speech pathology clinical services associated with the three graduate programs to the UTHSC College of Allied Health Sciences. The UT Hearing and Speech Center will remain in operation in Knoxville as an educational component of the graduate programs. Audiology and speech pathology faculty and graduate students will continue to offer clinical services to citizens of East Tennessee. Because the UTHSC College of Allied Health Sciences provides an infrastructure for the current administration of other clinical health services, the University expects increased efficiency in the College's management of the speech and hearing clinic.

Faculty of the audiology and speech pathology programs are supportive of the proposed administrative change and regard the transfer as an enhanced opportunity for collaboration across UTHSC health sciences professions for research, grant acquisition, and outreach. Since the graduate programs will be moved organizationally but not physically, no faculty members or graduate students will be relocated.

A comprehensive communications plan will inform students and potential majors about the upcoming changes. These communications include written letters to all students majoring in audiology and speech pathology programs and announcements of the move posted on the websites of both campuses.

The accreditation status of the programs will not change. With THEC approval of the MOU, the UTK Provost's office will notify the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech Pathology of the transition.